

SKIT ACTIVITY: GROUP C

Read the following excerpt from the *Mencius*.

Mencius (370–290 B.C.E.)—one of the most famous Confucian scholars. He helped further Confucian teachings, in particular the notion that human beings are basically good.

tilling—preparing land for growing crops; plowing and fertilizing

toil—hard work, struggle

Now, is ruling the Empire such an exception that it can be combined with the work of tilling the land? There are affairs of great men, and there are affairs of small men. Moreover, it is necessary for each man to use the products of all the hundred crafts. If everyone must make everything he uses, the Empire will be led along the path of incessant toil. Hence it is said, “There are those who use their minds and there are those who use their muscles. The former rule; the latter are ruled. Those who rule are supported by those who are ruled.” This is a principle accepted by the whole Empire.¹⁰

1. Circle the statement that best matches the meaning of this excerpt. Check with your teacher once you have decided.
 - Every person has his/her place in society.
 - Duties to one’s parents are of utmost importance.
 - Promote those who are most able.
 - Human beings are naturally good.
 - There are proper ways to treat the elderly and the young.
 - When others do not treat you well, think of how you could improve yourself.
2. According to Mencius, what will happen if “everyone must make everything he uses”?
3. According to Mencius, what type of person deserves to rule over other people?
4. As a group, prepare a presentation of this excerpt. Your presentation should
 - have participation by all group members;
 - clearly portray the meaning behind this excerpt **in a modern-day context** (such as in a classroom, school, or a current event); and
 - be interesting and creative.